

the discourse giving the
Analysis of the Truths

MN 141



The Discourse giving the Analysis of the Truths

(Saccavibhaṅgasuttam, MN 141)

Translated by Ānandajoti Bhikkhu

Thus I heard:

at one time the Gracious One was dwelling near Bārāṇasī in the Deer Park at Isipatana. There it was that the Gracious One addressed the monks, saying:

“Monks!”, “Reverend Sir!” those monks replied to the Gracious One, and the Gracious One said this:

“The Realised One, monks, the Worthy One, the Perfect Sambuddha, while near Bārāṇasī, in the Deer Park at Isipatana, has set rolling the unsurpassed Dhamma Wheel, and it cannot be rolled back by an ascetic or by a brahmin or by a god or by a demon or by a deity or by anyone in the world.

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That is to say, the explanation, revealing, making known, setting forth, opening up, analysing, and making plain of the four noble truths.

Of which four?

The explanation, revealing, making known, setting forth, opening up, analysing, and making plain of the noble truth of suffering.

The explanation, revealing, making known, setting forth, opening up, analysing, and making plain of the noble truth of the arising of suffering.

The explanation, revealing, making known, setting forth, opening up, analysing, and making plain of the noble truth of the cessation of suffering.

The explanation, revealing, making known, setting forth, opening up, analysing, and making plain of the noble truth of the practice leading to the cessation of suffering.

“The Realised One, monks, the Worthy One, the Perfect Sambuddha, while near Bārāṇasī, in the Deer Park at Isipatana, has set rolling the unsurpassed Dhamma Wheel, and it cannot be rolled back by an ascetic or by a brahmin or by a god or by a demon or by a deity or by anyone in the world.

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That is to say, the explanation, revealing, making known, setting forth, opening up, analysing, and making plain, of these four noble truths.

Associate with Sāriputta and Moggallāna, monks, keep company with Sāriputta and Moggallāna, monks, they are wise monks who assist those living the spiritual life. Sāriputta is just like one who gives birth, monks, Moggallāna is just like a wet nurse to the one new-born, monks; Sāriputta guides to the fruit of stream entry, monks, Moggallāna guides to the supreme good. Sāriputta is able, monks, to explain, reveal, make known, set forth, open up, analyse, and make plain the four noble truths in detail.”

The Gracious One said this, and after saying this, the Fortunate One rose from his seat and went into his living quarters.

Then venerable Sāriputta, not long after the Gracious One had gone, addressed the monks, saying: “Venerable monks!”

“Venerable friend!” those monks replied to venerable Sāriputta, and venerable Sāriputta said this:

“The Realised One, friends, the Worthy One, the Perfect Sambuddha, while near Bārāṇasī, in the Deer Park at Isipatana, has set rolling the unsurpassed Dhamma Wheel, and it cannot be rolled back by an ascetic or by a brahmin or by a god or by a demon or by a deity or by anyone in the world.

The Discourse giving the Analysis of the Truths - 4

That is to say, the explanation, revealing, making known, setting forth, opening up, analysing, and making plain of the four noble truths.

Of which four?

The explanation, revealing, making known, setting forth, opening up, analysing, and making plain of the noble truth of suffering.

The explanation, revealing, making known, setting forth, opening up, analysing, and making plain of the noble truth of the arising of suffering.

The explanation, revealing, making known, setting forth, opening up, analysing, and making plain of the noble truth of the cessation of suffering.

The explanation, revealing, making known, setting forth, opening up, analysing, and making plain of the noble truth of the practice leading to the cessation of suffering.

The First Noble Truth and its Analysis

Now what, venerable friends, is the noble truth of suffering?

Birth is suffering

also old age is suffering

also sickness is suffering

also death is suffering

also grief, lamentation, pain, sorrow, and despair, is suffering

also not to obtain what one longs for is suffering

in brief, the five constituent groups (of mind and body) that provide fuel for attachment are suffering.

Now what, venerable friends, is birth?

For the various beings in the various classes of beings there is birth, being born, appearing, turning up; the manifestation of the constituent groups (of mind and body), the acquisition of the sense spheres: this, venerable friends, is called birth.

Now what, venerable friends, is old age?

For the various beings in the various classes of beings there is aging, agedness, broken teeth, greying hair, and wrinkled skin; the dwindling away of the life span, the decay of the sense faculties: this, venerable friends, is called old age.

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Now what, venerable friends, is death?

For the various beings in the various classes of beings there is a fall, a falling away, a breaking up, a disappearance, a dying, a death, a making of time; the break up of the constituent groups (of mind and body), the throwing off of the body, this, venerable friends, is called death.

Now what, venerable friends, is grief?

For he who has, venerable friends, some sort of misfortune or other, who is touched by some sort of pain or another, there is grief, grieving, the state of grieving, inner grief, great inner grief: this, venerable friends, is called grief.

Now what, venerable friends, is lamentation?

For he who has, venerable friends, some sort of misfortune or other, who is touched by some sort of pain or another, there are laments, great laments, lamenting, great lamenting, the state of lamenting, great lamentation: this, venerable friends, is called lamentation.

Now what, venerable friends, is pain?

That, venerable friends, which is bodily pain, bodily disagreeableness, pain born of contact with the body, disagreeable feeling: this, venerable friends, is called pain.

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Now what, venerable friends, is sorrow?

That, venerable friends, which is mental pain, mental disagreeableness, pain born of contact with the mind, disagreeable feeling: this, venerable friends, is called sorrow.

Now what, venerable friends, is despair?

For he who has, venerable friends, some sort of misfortune or other, who is touched by some sort of pain or another, there is desponding, despairing, despondency, despair: this, venerable friends, is called despair.

Now what, venerable friends, is the suffering from not obtaining what one longs for?

To those beings subject to birth, venerable friends, this longing arises: “Oh, might we not be subject to birth, may birth not come again!” But that cannot be attained merely by longing for it: this is the suffering from not obtaining what one longs for.

To those beings subject to old age, venerable friends, this longing arises: “Oh, might we not be subject to old age, may old age not come again!” But that cannot be attained merely by longing for it: this is the suffering from not obtaining what one longs for.

To those beings subject to sickness, venerable friends, this longing arises: “Oh, might we not be subject to sickness, may sickness not

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come again!” But that cannot be attained merely by longing for it: this is the suffering from not obtaining what one longs for.

To those beings subject to death, venerable friends, this longing arises: “Oh, might we not be subject to death, may death not come again!” But that cannot be attained merely by longing for it: this is the suffering from not obtaining what one longs for.

To those beings subject to grief, lamentation, pain, sorrow, and despair, venerable friends, this longing arises: “Oh, might we not be subject to grief, lamentation, pain, sorrow, and despair, may grief, lamentation, pain, sorrow, and despair not come again!” But that cannot be attained merely by longing for it: this is the suffering from not obtaining what one longs for.

Now what, venerable friends, are the constituent groups (of mind and body) that provide fuel for attachment that are suffering? They are as follows:

the form constituent that is attached to
the feelings constituent that is attached to
the perceptions constituent that is attached to
the (mental) processes constituent that is attached to
the consciousness constituent that is attached to.

These, venerable friends, are called the constituent groups (of mind and body) that provide fuel for attachment and that are suffering.

This, venerable friends, is called the noble truth of suffering.

The Second Noble Truth

Now what, venerable friends, is the noble truth of the arising of suffering?

It is that craving which leads to continuation in existence, which is connected with enjoyment and passion, greatly enjoying this and that, as follows:

craving for sense pleasures
craving for continuation
craving for discontinuation.

This, venerable friends, is called the noble truth of the arising of suffering.

The Third Noble Truth

Now what, venerable friends, is the noble truth of the cessation of suffering?

It is the complete fading away and cessation without remainder of that craving - liberation, letting go, release, and non-adherence.

This, venerable friends, is called the noble truth of the cessation of suffering.

The Fourth Noble Truth and its Analysis

Now what, venerable friends, is the noble truth of the practice leading to the end of suffering? It is this noble path with eight factors, as follows:

right view

right thought

right speech

right action

right livelihood

right endeavour

right mindfulness

right concentration.

Now what, venerable friends, is right view?

That, venerable friends, which is knowledge about suffering

knowledge about the arising of suffering

knowledge about the cessation of suffering

knowledge about the practice leading to the cessation of suffering.

This, venerable friends, is called right view.

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Now what, venerable friends, is right thought?

The thought of renunciation
the thought of good will
the thought of non-violence.

This, venerable friends, is called right thought.

Now what, venerable friends, is right speech?

Refraining from false speech
refraining from malicious speech
refraining from rough speech
refraining from frivolous talk.

This, venerable friends, is called right speech.

Now what, venerable friends, is right action?

Refraining from killing living creatures
refraining from taking what has not been given
refraining from sexual misconduct.

This, venerable friends, is called right action.

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Now what, venerable friends, is right livelihood?

Here, venerable friends, a noble disciple, having given up wrong ways of livelihood, earns his living by a right way of livelihood.

This, venerable friends, is called right livelihood.

Now what, venerable friends, is right endeavour?

Here, venerable friends, a monk generates desire not to take up bad and unwholesome things that have not yet arisen, (in this regard) he endeavours, instigates energy, exerts his mind, and makes an effort.

He generates desire to give up bad and unwholesome things that have already arisen, (in this regard) he endeavours, instigates energy, exerts his mind, and makes an effort.

He generates desire to take up wholesome things that have not yet arisen, (in this regard) he endeavours, instigates energy, exerts his mind, and makes an effort.

He generates desire for the endurance of wholesome things that have arisen, their non-forgetting, multiplication, extension, development, and fulfilment, (in this regard) he endeavours, instigates energy, exerts his mind, and makes an effort.

This, venerable friends, is called right endeavour.

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Now what, venerable friends, is right mindfulness?

Here, venerable friends, a monk dwells contemplating (the nature of) the body in the body, ardent, clearly knowing, and mindful, after removing avarice and sorrow regarding the world.

He dwells contemplating (the nature of) feelings in feelings, ardent, clearly knowing, and mindful, after removing avarice and sorrow regarding the world.

He dwells contemplating (the nature of) the mind in the mind, ardent, clearly knowing, and mindful, after removing avarice and sorrow regarding the world.

He dwells contemplating (the nature of) things in (various) things ardent, clearly knowing, and mindful, after removing avarice and sorrow regarding the world.

This, venerable friends, is called right mindfulness.

Now what, venerable friends, is right concentration?

Here, venerable friends, a monk, quite secluded from sense desires, secluded from unwholesome things, having applied thought, sustained thought, and the happiness and rapture born of seclusion, dwells having attained the first absorption.

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With the ending of applied thought, and sustained thought, with internal clarity, and one-pointedness of mind, being without applied thought, without sustained thought, having the happiness and rapture born of concentration, he dwells having attained the second absorption.

With the fading away of rapture he dwells equanimous, mindful, clearly knowing, experiencing happiness through the body, about which the Noble Ones declare: “He lives pleasantly, mindful, and equanimous,” (thus) he dwells having attained the third absorption.

Having given up pleasure, given up pain, and with the previous disappearance of mental well-being and sorrow, without pain, without pleasure, and with complete purity of mindfulness owing to equanimity, he dwells having attained the fourth absorption.

This, venerable friends, is called right concentration.

This, venerable friends, is called the noble truth of the practice leading to the cessation of suffering.

The Realised One, friends, the Worthy One, the Perfect Sambuddha, while near Bārāṇasī, in the Deer Park at Isipatana, has set rolling the unsurpassed Dhamma Wheel, and it cannot be rolled back by an ascetic or by a brahmin or by a god or by a demon or by a deity or by anyone in the world.

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That is to say, the explanation, revealing, making known, setting forth, opening up, analysing, and making plain of these four noble truths.”

Venerable Sāriputta said this, and those monks were uplifted and greatly rejoiced in venerable Sāriputta’s words.